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think the Darwinian theory approximates to the truth, and especially those who hold the "complete" theory, will of course believe, that animals, classed as high among the Vertebrata as the Trilobites and Cephalopoda of Lower Silurian rocks are among the Annulosa and Mollusca, existed at that time in regions of the globe from which the ocean, perhaps, forever excludes the inquiring palæontologist from verifying his conjectures. The discovery of the Eozoon Canadense in the Laurentian rocks, and the existence of beds of limestone in the same system, seem to confirm the views of those who regard the whole of the sedimentary rocks, from the Silurian and Cambrian upwards to the latest Tertiary beds, as including but a partial and fragmentary record of the past life of the globe,—impressions of the last-formed links of the great chain of organic life on our planet,—a few of the last chapters in the book of "Ancient Life."—*Quarterly Journal of Science, London.*

MICROSCOPY.

Preparation of Snails' Tongues.—I present a plan devised many years ago, for such small forms as *Littorina* and the like, whose lingual ribbons are extremely tender, and difficult to see as well as handle. I use a rather strong solution of caustic potassa, the strength of which I cannot exactly specify, as it must vary with the species under manipulation, some having ribbons of such strength that they will bear the very strongest solution, while others will be injured by immersion in a comparatively weak liquid. Into this solution in a test tube or other convenient vessel, plunge the whole animal; in the case of the smaller creatures, shell and all. The specimen may be fresh, or preserved in alcohol, but on the former the potassa will act most vigorously. I have found that one good way is to let the animal stand in the shell until it dies and begins to decompose, when it can readily be removed, and falls in pieces. The lingual ribbon, as a general thing, is not easily decomposed. Now either set the potassa solution, with the animal in it, aside for some days, or boil it at once. You will then find that almost everything dissolves and becomes "soap," except the shell and operculum, a few shreds of muscular fibre, and the prized lingual ribbon. Frequent washing with fresh water now removes all the alkali, and leaves the teeth clean and in perfect order. It can then be mounted in any preservative fluid which is miscible with water, and is best removed to alcohol to be kept until it is mounted. To mount it, remove it from the spirit, and without drying plunge it in pure spirits of turpentine, in which it should be boiled for a short time to drive off some of the alcohol. It can now be mounted in Canada balsam, when it shows all its beauties in a remarkable manner, and, at the same time, shows its effects on polarized light. I would say, that the potassa cleans the shell and operculum beautifully.—A. M. EDWARDS, *New York.*

THE MOVEMENTS OF THE DIATOMACEÆ.—The movements of the Diatomaceæ still continue to puzzle microscopists, and various explanations of this phenomenon have been advanced. Professor Schultze has carefully studied a number of species, *Pleurosigma angulatum*, *Pleurosigma fasciola*, *Nitschia sigmoides*, *Surirella bifrons*, and others, making various experiments and observations upon them. He is led from these researches to conclude that a glutinous organic substance, which is concerned in rapid movement, is spread over the external surface of the Diatomaceæ. It is by this protoplasmic sheath that the *Bacillariæ* become adherent to one another. Professor Schultze does not consider that this view affects the question of the animal or plant nature of diatoms. He considers that they must be left with some other unicellular beings, as of "uncertain kingdom," until we know more of what constitutes the boundary, if there be any, between plants and animals.—*Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. T. M., Grand Isle, Vt.—The land snails sent for identification are as follows: The "largest, No. 1," is *Helix concava* Say. The "horn-colored, No. 2," is *Helix chersina* Say. The "small reflected lipped, No. 3," is *Helix minuta* Say. The "light-colored conical-shaped, No. 4," is *Pupa pentodon* Say. The late fall months will be found a very favorable time for collecting, as the leaves, having fallen, no longer obstruct the light, and the snails can be easily detected by turning up the damp layers in hard-wood growths.

D. S. C., Rockport, Ill.—"Essay on Classification," by Professor Agassiz, was published separately in London; Longmans & Co., 1859. You can undoubtedly obtain it by ordering of any prominent bookseller in New York. The cheapest form of cabinet for geological specimens is an upright case of shelves, like a bookcase. The shelves to be inclined, or to have separate steps on each shelf. For a conchological case, make a set of shallow drawers, 18x24 inches, and from two to five inches deep. For exhibition, nothing is better than a horizontal show-case, though this takes up a great deal of room.

E. L. M., New York.—Besides the works on Entomology already mentioned in the NATURALIST, you need the works on American